



## **AMERICA/CUBA - Good Friday as a public holiday and a Cardinal Ortega's message broadcast on national television**

Havana (Agenzia Fides) - With the churches that were overflowing with people, the Cubans began Holy Week in a more relaxed climate. Not only the announcement that Friday will be a public holiday on the island was made, but it was also announced that Cardinal Jaime Ortega, Archbishop of Havana, will present the message of Good Friday in a program broadcast on national television, something unheard of for Cuba in the last 40 years.

In Latin America, despite the days before Easter is a holiday period in many countries, Friday is characterized by a great religious fervor. On this day of great importance the message is focused on the last words spoken by Jesus on the cross. Thus, in all Latin American countries, the Bishops and parish priests are preparing themselves very well for this message, aware of the importance of this moment and the large amount of people who listen to it, through radio and television.

The announcement of a message broadcast on television on behalf of the Cardinal Archbishop of Havana on Good Friday follows the decision of Raul Castro's government to declare Good Friday as a public holiday, April 6, in response to a request made by Pope Benedict XVI in his recent apostolic Visit, from March 26 to 28. (CE)  
(Agenzia Fides 03/04/2012)